

**WEINNOTES – AJ Weinzettel Dave and Sara from Bells Up Winery
Transcription from Dave and Sara from Bells Up Winery Interview
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A.J.: Cheers to another episode of the Weinnotes Podcast. I'm your guide, AJ Weinzettel, on this journey of stories showcasing the people behind the wonderful world of wine, where we dive into conversations, ranging from terroir, viticulture to favorite music, superpowers, and more. Please enjoy this episode of the Weinnotes Podcast.

A.J.: Dave, Sarah, thank you so much for taking the time today, uh, to join me on the podcast. I really appreciate it. We're really

Dave from Bells Up Winery: happy to be here. Thanks so much for having

A.J.: us. Yeah. Well, thanks for this amazing son. I mean, we were about to order

Dave from Bells Up Winery: it up just for you man. You did, of course you brought it. Of course.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I brought in, you brought it. Wow. I should have done. You're not allowed to leave. God knows. We need more of this. All

A.J.: right. I'll I'll see what I can do. uh, before we begin, shall I pour a little bit of wine? Absolutely. Okay. So, you know, as always there is zero, um, Zero pressure. Okay. You can talk about it as much as you want.

A.J.: Okay. You can talk about it as little as you want. Okay. Uh, if you just wanna say it's gorgeous, it's beautiful. Or it's yucky and nasty. It's. That is totally, you

Dave from Bells Up Winery: wouldn't do that to us. Would you? He might.

A.J.: I wouldn't. No, no, no, no, no, I wouldn't. I wouldn't. Okay. All right. Um, oh, but yeah, it's been, I think the last time I was out here, it was the beginning of last year.

A.J.: I believe it was mm-hmm you know, it's, uh, it's been, it's been a little bit of time, so thank you so much for taking the time today.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh, absolutely. Absolutely lots, lots different this year than last year. That's for sure.

A.J.: Well, yeah. And I noticed like you got some new vines down there and like, I can't wait to hear kind of what's going on.

A.J.: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Okay. I'm not, I am not good at identifying wine. So I'm gonna go with it's red. It is, it

Dave from Bells Up Winery: is red. this doesn't smell like one of ours. So it doesn't smell like you pulled a fast one on us.

A.J.: That's the last thing that I will ever do. I will never, ever, ever do that. That would get

Dave from Bells Up Winery: really embarrassed.

A.J.: No, cause it's and it's a whole embarrassing thing.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right? I don't wanna do that. Oh, totally, totally. Right. Be like,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: wow, this is the worst wine ever. Oh, it's got

Dave from Bells Up Winery: it's it's now both of us are having allergies, allergy issues. So what's, we're not gonna be a hundred percent certainly on the aromas, but so why

Sara from Bells Up Winery: not do this outside?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: yeah, but I do. I do like, there's a, there's a toastiness to this, which is nice. Right? Um,

A.J.: Hmm,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: definitely. Doesn't definitely, it gives me the impression. This is not going to be a heavy wine, which is exactly where we want to be. We don't want, we don't want heavy. It's really hot.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So, I mean, looking at the color, I think I initially thought, well that there can't be a, you know, it's awfully dark. Mm. But I mean, I think it is now that I've sipped it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. This is a nice, I smelled it trying, I'm trying to think through vintage here. This is, this feels like it has some age to it. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: But not ludicrous age. I could see this. I can see this, like being a 15 or a 17 kind of has that feel to it. I really like the shape of this. Um, it kind of reminds, it does kind of remind me of, of one particular wine that I do. It kind of has a nice roundness to it. Right. Um, I, I tend to describe my wines a lot of term of a lot of, in terms of mouth feel.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Um, because I, I kind of find that that is more universal for people to kind of identify with. Right. Um, all of our pallets, obviously very, very different and, you

know, whatever, I may smell, whatever I may taste is gonna be totally unique to me and for each individual person. So I always think that, you know, if we can think about kind of how is it the path the wine takes as it passes across our pallet.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. I think are things that people can grab onto a little

A.J.: bit. Yeah, no, I, I do the same thing. Mm-hmm and you know, for me, there's, there's an elegance behind

Dave from Bells Up Winery: this wine. Mm-hmm, tell you this, it it's a wine. I would enjoy drinking very much, very gentle and it kind of reminds me, it kind of has this. Flow to it, of, of rising kind of in the center.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And our Titan Pinot noir is very, kind of has that same sort of shape. Um,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: yeah. And I'm guessing there is some age on it just,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I think there is two, but it's, I don't think it's not a lot. It's not 13, 14, anything like that. And I don't think it could be a 12 based on what I'm tasting, but I would say 15 or 17 wouldn't surprise me.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh, I might've said a 14, but I

Sara from Bells Up Winery: mean, it's possible every there laughing at us going, yeah, this is, this is like California, you know, from 2000 and well, if it was,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: it was, if it was, it could be, I like it though, but it definitely not, not GA aiming to me this, this definitely feels pish and I, right. Wouldn't be shocked if it wasn't, but I'd be surprised if it wasn't.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: That's fair.

A.J.: That's fair. Um, So I think that you wanted to try to like stump me and like turn the tables a

Dave from Bells Up Winery: little bit. Oh goodness. Oh yes we did. Yeah. Oh yes. So we've, we've got one for you since we asked about plantings

Dave from Bells Up Winery: mm-hmm so, okay. It'll tie nicely into that conversation. That's

Sara from Bells Up Winery: nicely. So, yes. All

Dave from Bells Up Winery: right.

A.J.: You know, nobody has done this yet. I know. Well,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: we are, we are trailblazer. Yes, you are very much so now you watch, this will turn out to be the same thing. Right? Hilarious. That would be absolutely hilarious. A double back, honestly. Oh my,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: that would be really funny, but no, they are clearly different

Dave from Bells Up Winery: lines. Yes. Well, certainly they're the source is definitely different. Yeah.

A.J.: um, so in looking at the color, it does look a little bit, you know, it definitely looks like it has some age on it. Mm-hmm you can, uh, you know, taste those, uh, tertiary flavors kind of coming through mm-hmm , you know, so, you know, I am guessing it's going to be older than this one. I would agree. Um, how old boy I'm gonna, I'm gonna go like it with an oh eight, um,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: fair guess.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Not that far. Not

A.J.: that far. Okay. Not that far. Not that far. All right. Um, definitely a Pinot. Uh, now watch me eat my words. um, but the structure, there's still some great structure into that one. Mm-hmm , you know, there's still some great, great tannins that are there. Mm-hmm um, you know, outta

Dave from Bells Up Winery: curiosity, do those tannins maybe make you think that maybe it might not be a peanut.

A.J.: Oh, now you're

Dave from Bells Up Winery: killing me.

A.J.: I mean, I see the shape of the bottle in the, in the bag mm-hmm and I'm like, well, that's not a penal bottle either, but

Dave from Bells Up Winery: you're right. would we do that to you? Well, you know, bottles of course, totally getting bottles was really hard, you know, you're trailblazers, exactly. Something

Sara from Bells Up Winery: well, we promise we will not keep you in suspense the whole time that we're doing this. We'll we'll reveal fairly quickly because there, you know, it, it does have

Dave from Bells Up Winery: part it, I

A.J.: would love it's involved in our story about this like 10

Dave from Bells Up Winery: minutes. Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's it's five and we can . Well, it, it, this,

A.J.: okay, so I will say that is definitely not a Pinot it's you're right?

A.J.: Yeah. Um, there's a, like a smokey ness to this mm-hmm there's um, the tannins aren't overpowering, but there's nice. Nice Tanin structure. That's there. Mm-hmm um, I was trying to pay attention to the acidity structure and I got all, um, yeah. Wow. I, I, I'm trying to think of the word. Um, like there was a squirrel.

A.J.: Oh

Dave from Bells Up Winery: wow. Discombobulated.

A.J.: Discombobulated. Yes. Distracted. Yes. I got distracted, um, ping pong effect. Right. You know, if, if I had to take another guess I would say this might be, be the cab that

Dave from Bells Up Winery: you did. Oh, also great guess, but no, because we have not been doing a cab for that long. No. Okay. Yeah. So, so then, but you are on the right track that we would not pour this for you, unless it was somehow relevant to our story.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right. So, so we'll go ahead. What we afforded for you? And I'm glad that you initially thought that this was a peanut. This is an Italian grape called SCO patina. I would've never guessed this. never guess. Come

Sara from Bells Up Winery: on.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Now's lay off the tongue now I know now, now this is a wine that a grape that is every bit is hard to spell as it is to say.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: But the reason that we have this is because this is one of our two new plantings from 2020. Now this is a grape grown in the freely region of Italy in the far Northeastern part of the country. Right? And I'm so glad that you thought this was a Pinot, because one of the reasons that we really wanted to plant this here in the valley is because it reminds us so much of a Pinot structure, Pinot style, right?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: We absolutely fell in love with it. Not to mention that for Yuli from a, uh, climatic standpoint is by far the closest thing that we have here in the valley cooler wetter, you're at the foothills of the Alps. You've got the cool breezes coming off of the Adriatic to kind of give you a shorter growing season.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I just personally happened to be such a fan of Italian red wines. I really wanted to do an Italian red here and right. You know, but you had to kind of start from. What can we actually consistently ripen? Um, and then what can we consistently ripen that we

can get cuttings of? Because Italy is full of amazing, tiny little obscure varietal that kind of exist in these little corner pockets of the country.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right? And you can find them if you go there, but you can't actually get cuttings of them to plant your own figure. But this is one, there are I think, six or so other plantings across the country, in the us, right? Most in California, one or two here in Oregon. Um, but we seem to have the biggest new planting in Oregon from what I can see planted in the fall of 2020 here.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Nice. A hopping

Sara from Bells Up Winery: seven rows. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So about 400 some odd plants, right? So, yeah, but still that's fun. That's exciting. Yeah, it is totally. And this is kind of where our mission we feel is, you know, when, when we came into the valley, um, we obviously we came here because we love the wines here. We love the industry here.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know, if we didn't want to do Pinot noir, we wouldn't be here. But with the numbers of wineries that exist here now, you know, we're up over 700, just in the valley. When so many people are making the same things, you know, we think this really gives us an opportunity to. We're gonna do Pinot. We're gonna do things that are in the heart of the valley, but at the same time we can diversify.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: We can bring more variety and we can really show our customers that this area is capable of growing other grapes. Right. They may be things like SCO Patino that are not kind of on people's radars. They're not gonna be things a lot of people are familiar with. Right. But because we're such a small place, we have the ability to kind of educate and kind of show folks to be able to say, we're gonna introduce some things and show you, you're gonna get to taste them and kind of be able to make your own decisions.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Um, and it's so much more fun obviously for us, but then also for our customers, you know, to kind of get some experiences here that you just will find in other places.

A.J.: Yeah. No. And that, that is, um, so I'm curious at what point did you decide to be like, I, I want to plant this here and. Um, that

Sara from Bells Up Winery: was actually a couple, three or four years ago.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: We, um, we, so we have several industry friends that we we've become really close to that we jokingly call our, our board of directors. Right. And right. Um, we had a couple over, um, who were super tight with, and, um, we were explaining, you know, we

really, at the time we weren't making the cab yet. Um, we were making CAH and it was selling out a lot faster than we could make it.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: You know, we kept increasing the volume every year and it was selling even faster. Um, we'd raise the price. It was selling in faster. So, um, so we, we were like, we need something else for when we run out of CAH to pull out like, ha what else?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And just as, just as important something we could grow here, right?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: The rah and, and the cab as well, we get from Milton free water in Northeastern, Oregon, but we really wanted something that, that was a state cause

Sara from Bells Up Winery: at the time we still had about. Three ish shakers left unplanted mm-hmm . And so we were trying to think, okay, what's the next step? And they had been to, um, Matthias and winery in California and they came back and they were like, we've got, we've got your answer.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: It's SCO Petino. And we were like, Scopa Wawa. Exactly. And, but we started researching it. Um, and yeah, and then, um, she's in the industry and was able to get us some, some Italian samples. Um, and so we actually sat down. And did a tasting with them and, um, my parents and, um, to deciding, are we gonna go for this or not?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And we decided, yeah, let's give it a shot. Wow. Let's just go ahead and plant seven rows. What, what, what could possibly

Dave from Bells Up Winery: go wrong? Nothing absolutely wrong. No, it'll be fine. It'll be fine. You don't know if you don't

Sara from Bells Up Winery: try, you don't know if you don't try. Right. Um, and then in the middle of it, we discovered that, um, that IHI, um, has a couple of rows of it.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, oh. And Brad was gracious enough to let us come down and sample his half barrel . Um, which was all he had. And he's been a wonderful resource for us as well. Um, and they finally had their first bottling, I believe. Was it last name? 19, 19. It was 19, 19. And then, then they sold it to club. And so they were very kind and, and like, they, it was so limited, um, right.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And they, they let me have. so, and then they,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: and they'll, they'll get our two bottles. Oh yeah. They'll be getting

Sara from Bells Up Winery: exactly plenty, but we were just like, oh, yay. So, so yeah, so we've tried a little Lamette valley, but not, I mean, there's just not lot. Right. So, um, so yeah, so, and

we've tried Californias. We have a few Californias, um, as well, but, um, we felt like this one was probably the closest.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: We're gonna get on our site. Um, it's actually a 13, as you can see. Right. Um, but, but yeah, we, we felt like this would be the one that is going to be the most representative of where we're at and what our soil type is and right. And the like, um, so yeah, so, and, and Dario at, at rose Marino is super excited about, I can imagine

Dave from Bells Up Winery: he's like, yes, pretty much.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh, and, and the thing about Dario, you know, This is not far from where he grew up. I mean, he, he grew up in Piedmont. This isn't, that terribly far from Piedmont. And when we told him, uh, you know, and this is a grape that even in Italy is fairly obscure. Um, so he kind of smiled, he went to his, he, he went over to his bar and he grabbed three, three Heino.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Now I couldn't have told you, there were three people in Italy doing Tino. I think he had all of them. Oh my goodness. So he just, he's just so excited. So excited years from now, when we're doing a winemaker dinner with him and we pull this out, I can't wait to see. Yeah. We're really amazing. He's just gonna light up.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh yeah. Oh, even more than he normally does, so yeah,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: right. Yeah. So, yeah, so it was fun. So, but we, yeah, that's what, you know, we, that, like Dave was saying, this is part of our, you know, we, we do have Pinot planted quite a bit. Right. But we wanted to plant some other things to stand out, um, because there are so many BEO plantings in the valley, so yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So, yeah. Yeah. And I

A.J.: think that's a perfect segue into, I, my apologies if I mispronounce, but that you're Saal, mm-hmm that's right. Um, So now we know the origin story behind this, but like, where did you get the idea behind planting's, uh, save all and like, whoa, whoa, what was

Dave from Bells Up Winery: that like? Yeah. So we, we moved here, uh, back in 2012 from Ohio and I 10 years ago, like literally like 10 years ago, but, you know, I don't wanna take that cuz it's it dates, it does date.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah, that's true. So anyway, so, um, when this, we moved from Ohio and in Ohio, you know, not exactly known as a magnificent grape growing area, having said that there's a lot of history of growing grapes in Ohio. And if you go back to pre-prohibition, Ohio was actually the number one wine grape producing state in the us.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Obviously it hasn't recovered from that. Right. But, you know, especially down around the Ohio river valley and where, where we came from in Cincinnati used to be called the little rhyme because you a, you had a lot of German settlers in, and then B the Ohio river valley just kind of felt like the Rhine river valley in a lot of.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Place. Right. So you did have a lot of grapes, uh, that were grown. And one of them is this save ALU, which is a French hybrid, um, hybridized in France from two different varieties of, uh, of Sebel, uh, S E B E L. Um, I don't know if any of it is actually grown in France today. I'd be surprised if any of it was quite a bit in England, quite a bit in Southern England, uh, where it turns out they use it, I guess, primarily in sparkling wines, right?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. That's my understanding, but where you normally find it in this country is Midwest Mid-Atlantic and particularly finger lakes in Western New York. So it does very well in cooler weather climates and, you know, based on just our view of where we wanted to take the winery, you know, we, we, as I said, you know, people growing and producing mainly the same things.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Well, Pinot is one on the red side and then Chardonnay is on the other side. We love Oregon Chardonnay, but if 500, 700 people are making it, I don't need to be another one. You know, we wanted to say, let let's produce some things that are, give us a complexity. That Chardonnay does, but that will just give people a very different look.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And so save all is something that back when I lived in Ohio and was making wine as a, uh, kind of a pre-professional first as a hobbyist and then as a seller worker, I have a lot of experience with this grape. I mean, I know how versatile it is and what it can do. And so I kind of felt that, you know, this was something that other people were not going to be terribly interested in growing because they really didn't know a lot of the story behind it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And they really kind of couldn't have a sense of where it fit maybe within their own product portfolios. But for us, it just really fits that style that we wanted to do. It's got a very earthy kind of Petro nose to it. So now I, I tell people, I say, it's not for everybody. I mean, if you're not into a, a very powerful white, you know, we, we totally understand.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. But it is such a fun wine for the folks that love it because it's got a very pineapple, tropical fruit palette, very different nose versus P thing. Um, and so it's really important when I present it here that we really walk through and describe what it is because for a lot of people that are kind of have west coast pallets that aren't familiar with, it it's a different animal.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So just taking that time to kind of say, you know, this is expect this. And then kind of step away and see what happens,

A.J.: right. Well, yeah. I mean, I think you have to give a little bit of like, Hey, this is something different. Mm-hmm mm-hmm because otherwise it would be like, what in the world is this?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: This is nasty,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: right?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Yep. Right. There's definitely a wind up yeah, no, you, yeah, you have to, we actually jokingly say did kind of pre-screens people before, before he pour it for them, because you have to be somewhat adventurous. I mean, even if it's to try a hybrid, right. You do. Um, and so, yeah, so a lot for a lot of people it's.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I'll wear of adventurous. And so mm-hmm then that's when people discover, maybe they're not so adventurous. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: But it works the other way too. I mean, you know, we, we kind of see, but at the very least what we see is that folks really, really appreciate that. You're trying to do some variety and diversity.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Um, and, and just kind of put some new, put some new looks out there for folks so that they're not always in the same situation all

A.J.: the time. Right? No, that makes complete sense. Mm-hmm oh, and then going back in your story, like mm-hmm, , you know, 2006 ish. Yeah. You know, you're an attorney mm-hmm oh, a little bit of a side tangent, right.

A.J.: Being an attorney. Have

Dave from Bells Up Winery: you watched better call Saul? I no, I'm worried about flashbacks. Okay. You know's fair. That's fine. So, so wait, funny, funny tangent to the tangent. So when I was in law school in the late later part of the nineties, right? This is when that TV show law and order was really starting to pick up steam and get really popular.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And people in my law school classes would have these watch parties on, I don't remember which night it was that law and order was taped on. Uh, and I couldn't. I just couldn't do it because I was, I mean, this is what I did studying for 12 hours a day. Right. And the last thing that I wanted to do was watch TV about lawyers, you know, and I know better Carl Sal is a, is not that sort.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right, right. But you know, you do kind of get into that, that part of the life where you say, oh my God, I'm so happy. I don't do

A.J.: that anymore. Right. No. And, and, you know, and I don't, I don't, uh, I can totally understand and agree with that. but here you are, you know, in 2006, you're an attorney, you put a lot of time into your studies, into your education.

A.J.: What was it about wine that like made you want to like. first start off as a hobby. Yeah. And then ultimately, ultimately be like, I wanna put this into a competition and like, like really say

Dave from Bells Up Winery: byebye to the law. well, do you wanna start that one? How, how do you wanna stay that? that's

Sara from Bells Up Winery: totally up to you. um, so actually, um, so prior to making wine, Dave and I, um, we were trying to become parents and we had three miscarriages and two were late term and this all happened in 13 months.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and so our marriage was in a really bad place and we had, um, a marital counselor. Right. Who said, you guys need to find something to do together to reconnect. Um, and we liked to drink wine. Um, you know, that Dave did study for the bar exam. Um, but , but, um, but you know, it wasn't and we'd kicked around the idea.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Oh yeah. Wouldn't it be fun, you know, maybe someday to make wine. And so I had signed us up for a course, you know, there was a class taught by a local. Winemaker. Um, super great guy really knew very knowledgeable, um, and bought a kit. Right. And so we started making wine on our five year wedding anniversary, literally as a reason to reconnect.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, that's awesome. And jokingly, our label was therapy um, and that's what we called it. Our, our, our marital council loved it. Um, and so, and that's what we did and that's how we got started. Um, it was really. You know, supposed to be something that would, um, help us bond and, and give us a shared project.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Mm-hmm , you know, that had some assurance of success when you know, pregnancy was not. Um, well,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: and the thing about wine just in general is, you know, what we've always loved about that specifically is that the best wines are the ones that you don't have to psychoanalyze. You know, they, they just, they get put on the table, they get shared with friends and family and they just bring people together and, you know, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Given what Sarah was saying about, you know, where we were in our lives, God knows, you know, this just kind of felt like another way to kind of accomplish that and to

Sara from Bells Up Winery: have some fun. Right. And so, yeah, so that's how it started. And then it. Just kind of, I sort of spiraled outta control um, you know, we started making six gallons of, of, um, drinkable RHA, uh, from a kit and , I've had worse

Dave from Bells Up Winery: commercials.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: We got worse. It was OK. It wasn't

Sara from Bells Up Winery: amazing, but it was all. And then we kind of discovered, oh, the white wines are better in the kits than the, than the reds. Um, because they're not on the skins. Right. You just get, they literally give you a bag of, um, grape juice that's you know, so it's like a bag of Welchs.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Right, right. But it's whatever the grape is. And then you ferment, it's not on the skins it's, you know, so it's okay. But it's not amazing, but we okay. We, we made it through that. We didn't kill anybody. And, okay. So, so Dave started to get really interested and. Very quickly, um, hooked up with a local vintners club, um, and, um, was able to get real grapes right from, um, and that group was, he was the youngest member by at least 30 to 40 years.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, but they would bring in fruit actually from California, they would truck it in. Oh, wow. It was. Not the premium stuff, right? So this was like seconds. Maybe it was still, you know, but as an amateur, you know, they would all get together on a weekend. They would get this huge truck or refrigerated fruit come in.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: They would all get together. They would process it out at somebody's house. Everybody would bring their six gallon buckets, um, and fill them up with, with whatever and take it back home, um, and, and make their wine. And, um, it was really one of those things where if you're not getting the best fruit, you really learn how to make the best wine you can.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and so for Dave, I think that was probably the most, one of the most valuable experiences as an amateur was knowing that this is not the greatest fruit in the world. How can I get Cokes, the best wine out of it? Um, and so that went on for, for quite some time. Um, and then we started taking wine vacations, um, and we're not really Napa Sonoma people.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, obviously he probably figured out by now we're. Little weird. Um, and so we did the offbeat regions, right? So we did finger lakes and we did Texas hill country back when, before it was even a thing. Um, right. Like in, in, yeah. And then we came here on oh eight, um, and just absolutely fell in love with it.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: It was part of a two week Oregon vacation. We spent four days here at the end of it. And we were like, Ooh, this is it. Right. Um, and this is what we wanna do. Um, even then we said, you know, in 20 years, but you know, I remember we stayed at Shahala Ridge bed and breakfast. It's 400 feet up the hill from us.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and I remember looking down at the view and saying, this is it. We're gonna move here. We're gonna get property on bell road. You're gonna be a winemaker.

We're gonna have a vineyard and we're gonna do it in 20 years. And Dave was like, yeah, that sounds about right. Um, and then coming home from that, um, and my, my mentor called me a month later and said she was diagnos.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Stayed for pancreatic cancer. Um, and she had three small children and she died 10 months later. Um, we ultimately, um, formed our family through adoption. Um, so our daughter was adopted, um, at birth. Um, and so she was born right before Christmas that year. Right. Um, and then Dave, um, was, uh, doing corporate tax work.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: He was doing mergers and acquisitions, um, and was really good at what he did and hated every living minute of it and, and had become, um, kind of a miserable person and was really just really unhappy, deeply depressed, um, incredibly stressed and, and just, and, and kind of a puddle. They were pushing him to make partner and he sort of snapped.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And, and I said, and then I snapped and I said, that's it. We're not doing this anymore. Right. Life is too short. Life is too short and you are really successful at something that you absolutely hate. Um, so how much more successful would you be doing something you. And you really love making wine. Right? I mean, by then it was everywhere in the house.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I mean, it had everywhere. It started. That's true. In one room in the basement, it took over the basement, it took over the garage. It took over the dining room. I mean, literally you, you would go to the, to the bathroom and you'd pull the shower curtain aside and there would be a ferment going in the bottom of the tub.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I mean, it just never ended. And so, so yeah, so we, um, they, the company he was with was amazing. They gave him a year leave of absence and we went to all, um, six wineries in Cincinnati, um, and asked if anybody would take him on to learn, how do you get this outta your basement? Um, and, and become a real.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Winemaker. Right. Um, and, and do this as a career. Um, and one gentleman said, I will take you under my wing. I will teach you everything. I know I can't pay you anything, but, um, I will teach you, you know, it'll be open book, even my books. I want you to see my books. I want you to see the good, the bad and the ugly of this financially.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and he was amazing probably, um, the best mentor I think you could have ever had. You had no doubt. Um, Joe hanky at Hank winery on the west side, they just celebrated, I think, 26 years. Um, I think I just saw a post. Super Zen. Right. Kind like nothing. I mean, nothing phases that guy. Um, and it was totally different, you know, approach to life and work than, than being a tax attorney.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Well, yeah,

A.J.: right. Yeah. It, it is a totally different lifestyle. It's a totally different mentality. Yeah. You

Dave from Bells Up Winery: you're going from a career where you're used to micromanaging every step of a process to a career where you have influence, but no control over anything. Uh, so there is a big mental shift in trying to kind of figure out, you know, how to, you know, just kind of how to kind of get into the rhythm of, you know, what, of what the season is like and, and how to produce a product.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I mean, obviously it's always different every year. Right. But you kind of start to learn to trust the process over time. And so Joe was amazing in helping me to be able to do that.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. So Dave worked for him, um, for four years, um, and in 2011, um, entered in one, two amateur national wine, making competitions with two vastly different wines, including one save all.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And so it was kind of a Wargon conclusion that we were gonna plan it here because it was part of our story. Um, right. And, and we didn't plan a lot. I mean, I think we planned half an acre to start with, um, we not even that, not, yeah, probably not. And then we've slowly expanded a little bit more and more.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, but yeah, it was the first one in the valley and the second in Oregon, um, they have it down at JIRA day in Roseburg and they've had it since the eighties. Wow. so, yeah. So it took what, 40 years for somebody to come along and plant plant some more course they've all want. Yeah. Um, but yeah, so, but they've been great to us.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And so yeah, it's, it's really, it's just fun to be different. And, you know, we kind of, we do a lot of things different, so, well,

A.J.: well, you know, you gotta be different and you gotta be bold and you gotta be brave. And, you know, I, I, if I remember correctly, you were at some sort of, um, Yeah, like market or something.

A.J.: And you heard about this property or somebody told you

Dave from Bells Up Winery: about it? Oh

Sara from Bells Up Winery: yeah. It, um, we, we, when we moved here, we rented a condo because it's really hard to find the right thing from 2,500 miles away. Right. Right. Like online

Dave from Bells Up Winery: it's impossible. It's it's not easy. And then there's something about people from California, all having much more money than we did.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: It's so discouraging. Yeah. It's, you know, we, we were telling people and, and it really is true that if even in, you know, when we bought the place in 2012, so

it's it's was a very different market. But even then, if you saw something and it was on the market and it had a whiff of vineyard potential, you would essentially already lost it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Right. You were gonna get outbid. And while we had enough money to start. This, we, we did not have enough money to just kind of start throwing it out at willy-nilly. We had to find something. And, and one of the things we figured out was we had to find something before it went on the market. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Which means we had to be here and be ready to pounce, uh, and through a networking process. Yeah. And that's what we did.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I mean, I, I literally networked and like told everybody that I'm not, you know, the cashier at Fred Meyer and, and well, ultimately the lady at the peach stand in St. Paul and right. She said, Hey, how do you feel about bell road?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And I, I would give my it to be on bell road. How do, what, what, how do, what do you got? And so she, she, um, had worked for somebody who lived here, um, who was a vineyard land use attorney who, um, happened to live right across the street. Um, and we had agreed to work together, uh, on a Friday. And I brought her a retainer check on a Sunday and turned around and saw this property.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And it was quite the eyesore at the time. It, it was covered in dead Christmas trees. Um, the family that, that had it had six kids and they were a little busy. Um, so, yeah, even though their last one was just about to go off to college, they were a little busy and, and I said to her, you know, that that place would be perfect.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Can you get it for me? And she was like, wow, that's a little, you know, audacious. And I was like, you're a little holding my retainer check. It's a phone call. And so she called me two days later and said, this is what they want. And, and I said, I'll take it. And meanwhile, Dave was harvest interning at Alexander and had no idea, um, that I had gone out and just bought a property with

Dave from Bells Up Winery: telling him suffice to say that was a bit of a shock at first.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Right. Well, yeah.

A.J.: Did see it. So did, did you present, like when he walked in the door that night, she's like, Hey, here's a nice

Dave from Bells Up Winery: glass of wine. No, no, no

Sara from Bells Up Winery: kidding. Go. I called him at work. He was in the middle of a meeting, um, with Brian wild, their winemaker and Lynn pinash was still there consulting winemaker at the time.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And right. I interrupted his meeting and I said, I don't care what you have to do. We're meeting this. Uh, we, we're going to this property at seven 30 cuz I'm buying. And he was just like

Dave from Bells Up Winery: asleep. Yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And he was doing like 18 hour days and he was, he just said to me, like what you did, what do you even, how do you even know it'll grow grapes?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And I'm like, oh my God, just trust me. It's on bell road. It's on bell road. Like, can you just trust me with us? That he was like, okay. And then we, we got here and we drove up to the top of the driveway and turned around and saw that and right. And for the first time, honestly, and we were just like, yeah,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Okay.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Well, and we set, we sit right next to one of the oldest vineyards in the valley

Sara from Bells Up Winery: with

Dave from Bells Up Winery: the met vineyard vineyard. So once you kind of saw it and put it in context, it then made sense. Right? Right. None of this of course was known on the phone call at the time. I first heard no, no, no, no. But, but

A.J.: also like some of the journey that you, you know, you went through, right.

A.J.: You're making, you know, your, your marriage was on this like kind of Rocky path. You're making wine together to be able to like, over those those years, right. There speaks huge amounts, right. To be able to call 'em up and say, Hey, we need to talk right now, I'm buying this piece of land. Mm-hmm . And for you not to be like, what in the blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

A.J.: Mm-hmm right. Speaks.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Well, it kinda was well, but that was, it could have been so

Sara from Bells Up Winery: much worse. Oh yeah, absolutely. Yeah. Right. I mean, I think there was a certain degree of trust. Um, there was also a certain degree of, of. Um, abject exhaustion on his part. So he was kind of like very malleable at that point. So he was like, okay.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah, Sarah and I, Sarah and I, one of the things that, that we do very well is we communicate very, very well with each other. Right. And that kind of builds the

trust that you're talking about over the course of a marriage. And, you know, the, the, the Rocky place that we were in the marriage was, you know, trauma based, you know, that's really what it was, was driving it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right. You know, we're both kind of dealing with our own individual traumas and then you of course have the marriage trauma that derives from that. Right. So really that was kind of the biggest thing to overcome. And. You know, but that the communications part of it never really stopped. You know? So from that side, we were able to make a recovery, I think a lot easier than if it had been caused by a lot of other things.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah.

A.J.: Yeah. No, that's, that's awesome. And just like a big shout out to the both of you. I mean, well, thank congratulations. That's just, thank

Dave from Bells Up Winery: you.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Well, I would like to say we celebrated. 20 years last October. Well, we didn't have time to celebrate because it was harvest .

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah, we got married on October 6th, 2001.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And had we known that this was our future. It would've been in the spring trust. We've done the spring wedding all, but yeah,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: so we didn't really celebrate, um, I, I, yeah, I, I think we remembered that day that I was like, happy anniversary. Yeah, you too. Now where's the, where's the birth that's coming

Dave from Bells Up Winery: today.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: When am I punch downs? Yep. Let's go. Let's get, get,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: you know. Yeah, yeah. So no that, that, but yeah, we, so yeah, we made it through that and I think if you can get through something like that, really, I mean, we've had stuff happen here that, you know, I think a, a lot of times we're, we're, we're where we may even really wanna strangle each other.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: But the reality is we both are, we have each other's box. Right. And we know, um, That we've been through the absolute worst thing that could ever happen to somebody. Yeah. You know, the death of a child is the worst thing that could ever happen. Yeah. And, and so I think we know, um, from that perspective yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Late frost and April, eh,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: ah, we're good. Yeah. We'll figure it out. We'll figure it out. We'll be fine.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Something will happen. We'll maybe we'll have fruit. Maybe we won't. I mean, you just, you just do

Dave from Bells Up Winery: in June. Yeah. We'll figure it out. Exactly. You know,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: it really puts the rest of your life in perspective. And, and I will say too, you know, having lost my mentor and then along the way, you know, this process.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: You know, has been something that has taken us a lot longer than we ever thought it would, you know, to get this up and running and right. Um, and, and along the way, we have lost several people that were near and dear to us, big supporters, um, or, you know, people that have had other traumas in their lives, um, as well.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And, um, and, and so we, you know, for us, that is just really, it's very personal to us. You know, we have people tagged on vineyard rows in, in their memory because they can't be here. Right. But we want them here. Right. Exactly. And so, yeah, I mean, we even have the ashes of a former club member in our vineyard because she was so passionate about this place and her husband was too.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And when they, when she passed away, he, he was like, I'd like to put her ashes in your vineyard. And we were like, okay. And he is like, are you creeped out? And we're like, no, we're shocked that anybody that, that you think that highly of us, right. And that you wanna do that. And we're, we're. I mean very honored, but wow.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Right. So, so yeah, I mean, I think we have a, we have kind of a different perspective on it than, than a lot of people do. Um, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Well, so yeah. Yeah.

A.J.: Well, and, and just in your day to day operation, the, how you all connect with your guest, it's, you know, your tastings, you know, it's one on one. Yep. Which is amazing.

A.J.: And that connection just, uh, it thrives, it grows. And then you get tagged in like engagement pictures on Instagram.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: right. And it's the most, it's the coolest thing about what we do is, is the connections. And then when you see people taking your product and incorporating it into. Whether it's the everyday moments or the really, really special moments, right?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: They, they put the trust in your product, in, in the fruit, literally the fruits of your labor to share with friends and family and, and all the people close to them. That's why we got that's the magic of wine that I just don't think anything else can bring you. No. Um, and so that's, it's the. Of what we do is just seeing that.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And, and we encourage that from folks, but, you know, you're right. The connections were always so important to us. Wine is such a personal thing to everybody, right. And so we just kind of take it to the next step and say, you know, I wanna have, when people come in here, I want them to be able to connect, not just with the wine, but with us.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And to really kind of take the, that to the next level, to be able to give people the opportunity to ask the whys of what you do, you know, what inspired you to kind of do things in the way you've done it. Um, and I tell people, you know, there are no state secrets here. I mean, there is literally nothing you can ask me about our process.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Anything that I do that I won't tell you, you know, because that it's open. I mean, when you get down. You, you boiled all this down. All we're really talking about is fermented grape juices with wine and humans have been doing this for 8,000 plus years of our it's kind of crazy. Totally. And the sciences, you know, obviously the techniques are different, but the science is no different than it was 8,000 years ago.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And so, you know, as a winemaker, you know, there's so much, as you know, there's so much ego that gets into this side of the business, right? And it really humbles you when you sit back and realize that your job is to be a caretaker. You are to be a caretaker. You know, a once the grapes come in your job is to make sure that the yeast can do their job properly.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So you are. Uh, essentially a slave to one cell little one cell organisms and then you get everything in barrel. Your job in the barrel is keep everything clean and full. And it's, it's a lot of janitorial stuff. Right, right. It's, it's just very humble stuff, but it's so important to just do all the detail things.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And so, you know, I kind of just look at my position as to say I'm really not a magician with any of this stuff. So I'm no different than anybody sitting over in the other side of the table from me. Mm-hmm . Yeah. So, you know, we're gonna share it all, you know, whatever people wanna. Yeah. Yeah.

A.J.: And you know, a lot of people when they, you know, visit and they have like a, a one-on-one with the winemaker, like, oh, mm-hmm, a winemaker.

A.J.: He's a, he's he's a super God.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Oh gosh. Yeah. Not this one. Well,

A.J.: you know, and that, that's one of the things that I try to like convey they're, you know, wine makers are just normal people, just like you and I. Yeah. And it's.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yep. And we all have our influences and, and our absolutely the things we wanna accomplish and our, our preferred styles and the things that excite us and the things that drive us crazy, you know?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: But yeah, you're exactly right. We're, we're no different than anybody else. We made a few different life choices, but aside from that,

that's

A.J.: it? Yeah. No, and you've been very methodical in what you've done out here. Uh, so this year, 10th anniversary mm-hmm and now you're like a hundred percent estate.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So we'll, we're gonna be a, as far as Pinot NUA goes, starting in 2022, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: We will be a hundred percent estate mm-hmm . Um, and so going forward, really the only fruit we're going to have to buy is we make a sirrah. We make a cab with fruit coming from Northeastern, Oregon. Right? Uh, we, the, we just know that those are grapes, that we don't have the climate for. Right. We're not gonna have the climate for it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Our customers love them, so we wanna provide them. But at the same time, that's, we're always gonna have to buy from that particular place. Mm-hmm . Other than that, The other 90% of our, our production is going to come from our statement.

A.J.: That's that is a huge

Dave from Bells Up Winery: accomplishment. Yeah. Well, thank you. We, we call this the end of the beginning, you know, cause this is something that if you started well methodical, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And so, you know, we thought very much about kind of how this was gonna play out. You know, what Sarah was saying about the state of the property when we found it being covered in dead Christmas trees, you know, there was no way around, we were gonna have to plant everything that we were gonna do, and that was gonna take time, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: For patients. Um, and in the meantime, though, we had to have product to pour. So what we decided to do was focus on buying fruit from vineyards that were like us. We don't buy from big commercial places. We buy from small acreages people that live on the properties they farm, right. And are at a minimum driving their own tractor.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know, we wanted people that had a personal stake in care about the quality of fruit coming from their vineyard, just like what we did. So we said, you know, this is gonna start out. And all the fruit initially was gonna come from there. As our vineyard got old enough to start to kind of incorporate it into the wines, we would start doing that and sort of transition that process began in 2019.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And so at, from 2019 into 20 into 21, you're starting to see our fruit become component parts of the wine. Right. And that process then culminates in 2022, when we start to see all of it coming from the estate thing. Right.

A.J.: And, and to kind of pro to put a perspective out there for everybody that that's listening.

A.J.: So you bought the property in 2012 mm-hmm yeah. Your first estate. Fruit

Dave from Bells Up Winery: came, came in 2017, but that was solely Rose Rose. Um, you know, we started, so the first year that we lived on the property in 2013 was spent clearing the dead, of course. Right. And that, you know, that was fun. Cuz you got to learn how to drive a bulldozer in a backhoe and make a whole lot of burn files.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So, you know, it's, it's very productive. You can at least kind of see things gradually getting better, but it also meant you couldn't start planting until the spring of 2014. Right. You know? And so that's where it began and you know, because we're not trust fund kids, you know, we kind of have to do this thing where.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know, we plant a little bit and then we sell a few more cases and then we can plant a little more and then this, and then it kind of builds until you kind of get to, to, to there. Right. But then 2017 was where, you know, we started to say, well, okay, you know, it's mature enough to use, but at the same time, we're not gonna ask this to do, to do adult Pinot.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. We're gonna right. Take this as it is and say delicious, but not complex until we get another couple of years to build the root structure, to start seeing more of that complexity, we're just gonna use it for rose. Right. And it was two years later in 19 when we hit that point. Yeah. Nice.

A.J.: Nice. Yeah.

A.J.: Wow. Um, so you talked about cab mm-hmm . Yeah. Oh, I, you know, we we've talked about the Saal we've talked about, I'm not even going to try to pronounce it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: steel, the cause I'm tight. . Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Um, and don't worry when it goes on, when it goes eventually in a bottle, it's gonna have a musical name, like everything else.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: We're not gonna expect our customers to spell or pronounce it. Oh, come on. right. Um,

A.J.: but white. I know that you just started it and like, it sounds like you're gonna keep it going. But like, yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So this was a product of, of the 20, 20 smoke and fire issues. Um, we at our site got incredibly lucky. Um, you know, we, we got very little of the problematic smoke that a lot of people had.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Um, the air quality, obviously. Wasn't great. But as we taste through our 2020s, especially off of the estate, we're seeing very, very little smoke impact at this point. So we're very lucky having said that one of the vineyards that we had been purchasing Pinot fruit from did get heavily hit. Right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And in fact, um, God bless her. I was, I would've still bought the fruit, but she called me and said, Dave, I do not feel comfortable selling this fruit to anybody. I'm just not prepared. And I, and it broke my heart because this is somebody who I adore, who nobody works harder than she does. And we worked with her for a long time.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Um, so I respected that, but at the same time, we kind of started looking at each other and said, can, can we replace this? ? I mean, this is right after labor day, you're maybe three

Sara from Bells Up Winery: weeks from harvest. And, and the other, the other thing is we had, we had just lost our other grower that we had been purchasing from for all these years.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, because they had been a, um, somebody that we had worked with from the beginning and they decided to retire mm-hmm and they. Sold their vineyard. And so 19 wound up being the last year we had their fruit too. Um, so, so yeah, cuz that contract just poof went away. Um, so suddenly we didn't have, quite the, uh, the, the inventory that we had planned to make was no, it just sort of went poof.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, so yeah,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: so, so we hit a point where we kind of had to make a decision and we'd been buying rah from, uh, the summit view vineyard in, in the Milton free water area since we started production in 2013. And so we kind of thought, well, if it's just a question of filling a gap for one particular year, let's give Tom the grower a call and just see if there's anything that's hanging that he hasn't sold yet.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And so he said, well, we've got Sur, excuse me, we got cab and we have Merlo still. Yeah. And we thought about it and said, well, we just generally we're

gonna have an easier time probably marketing and selling the cab than we will. The Merlo not that the Merlot I'm sure isn't amazing. But just, we thought this was a one time thing.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yep. Right. So we bring it in. We make it. Um, we get it in the barrel, come back to it about three months later and start tasting it. and I'm floored because you know, one of the things that I love about a mountaintop vineyard out there is it's gonna give you a much smoother, more elegant, big red, and that's exactly stylistically what we wanna do to supplement what we do on Pinot.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right. But this cab was ridiculous. It was already showing these soft, supple, elegant notes that I would expect in a 10 year old California cab. And we're seeing this after three months. Dang. And I kind of started looking and I even kind of brought a shocked face home to Sarah one day and just said, um, this is really good.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You might wanna try this. I didn't believe him.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I, I thought. Is totally BSing me. I would. There's no way it can't, it can't be good. It's only been in the barrel three months. There's no way, no way. Uh, no, no. And he wouldn't shut up. so finally, after like 48 hours, I said, fine, I will come and taste the cab.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And, and we came up and he pulled me a sample and I tasted it and I was like, oh, oh, oh, we could bottle this right now. This was, it was that good? It was shocking. And I, wow. And then I said, and I'm gonna go call Tom and put in for another ton for this fall. And he said, no, no, no, no, no. I'm not making it again.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: This was a one time thing. I'm never gonna make it again. You can't tell me I will. I'm not gonna do it. I'm the winemaker. You don't make these decisions. And I said, all right, whatever. And so then he, cuz we all know that's not true actually. But um, but then the, then he started letting wine club members tasted out of the barrel.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: you know, they kept saying, right, please make this again. You will make this again. Yeah. You're gonna make this again. Right. Of course. So

Dave from Bells Up Winery: we're after the shocked looks kind of evaporated, they, they kind of, yeah, so she doesn't make the decisions, but the customers do. Yeah. And they're paying . So I was like, you know, uh, so for that reason, we started to have to make a cap.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And it's a good, it's one of those good problems to have, right. That you've gotta wine that people won't let you stop making. We ultimately decided that the best way to position it would be as a club member only option, um, to kind of tease people with, well, yeah, just to be able to say, yeah, you know, this is something that's pretty darn special and if you wanna get it, here's what you gotta do, you know, gotta have a little skin in the game, so to get it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So, I mean, again, we

Sara from Bells Up Winery: don't make a lot of it. Yeah. We don't make a lot of anything. Um, you know, right now we're at 600 cases. So, you know, it's not like we. You know, 600 cases of cab to sell. We have mm-hmm I don't know. I don't even remember what it

Dave from Bells Up Winery: was 60. We started with about 60 and 60 something. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Something like that. So it's a ton of fruit. It's it's about common, what you'd expect, but yeah, so, but it's again, just nice to have something that is made in a Pinot style. Mm-hmm that has the flavor, the characteristics of cap, but is not gonna just be loaded down with tan structure and right, right. So much more approachable and so much more versatile for, for a young wine.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And, you know, the reality is, you know, we, we all love, we all love aged wines, but the reality also is that for most of our customers, they're not for one reason or another, they're not going to take the time to age their minds. So. What we feel we have to do is to be able to provide people with a versatility to say, you can absolutely consume this when it's very young and it's gonna be approachable, but your patients will be rewarded if you put in the time and the patients and you do all those things, you'll have that option as well.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right. But you kind of have to think about, well, as with everything in this business, through the eyes of how are your customers going to use your product? Right. You know, I mean, you can't just say, all right, I'm gonna make what I wanna make. You know, whatever happens. No, it's you gotta think about them and say all.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know, how are we gonna make it more easier for them to want to go back and buy more later on?

A.J.: Right. Exactly. And, you know, you said a, a very good role model of patience and just what you've done here. So maybe, maybe they'll like, listen a little bit and in, in 20 years to be like,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: holy cow, his cab, you know, so, you know, so, but, but that's what library wines are for too, you know?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So we, we do some of that to be able to give folks the option to say, all right, look, we'll do the aging for you, cost you a little more, but at least we'll handle the we'll handle the, you know, the heavy lifting for you. Yeah.

A.J.: Most definitely is there by chance, a Oregon wine community story that like really stands out to you.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh gosh. You know, I don't know. I mean, and Sarah made the answer this herself. Okay, go ahead.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Well, I would say what was really interesting to us was in the beginning when we first started, um, and you know, when we first moved here, We we knew. Literally, we knew Kurt and Chris tell who owned Shahala Ridge bed and breakfast.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: That was it. We knew nobody else out here. Right. Um, Dave had met with Myron Redford, um, at Amity vineyards at the time and had spent, um, a very lengthy afternoon with him, um, and, and really gleaned a lot from that conversation. Um, and had the, he, you had the, the harvest internship lined up at Alexander, but the reality is we knew nobody.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and so, um, we started, we were introduced to some other small wineries, like us who had been doing this for a while, whose model that we really wanted to emulate. Um, and I remember very quickly sitting, you know, they would agree. Okay. Yeah. We'll sit down and talk with you. And, um, and we would ask them pretty much right off the bat.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, tough questions, like, you know, what's, what's the biggest mistake you've ever made, you know, what was the worst decision you ever made? Right, right, right. If you had to do it over again, what would you change? And, and every single person was like, wow, I've never been asked that before. not one person who's ever come in here with the winery stars in their eyes has ever asked me, you know, what, what went wrong.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Right, right. And so, and we were like, well, we wanna know, because, you know, if you've made the mistake, we don't wanna make a mistake. We'll make our own. Um, right. But we'd like to know what we should be aware of. And, and so that really, I think what was so interesting was, um, how much credibility that gave us, like right off the bat as being, you know, because yes, the community can be very welcoming, but there is a certain, um, type of person that just comes in with, with a lot of cash to throw around and, and maybe isn't as invested or has taken the time.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, like we, I mean, not, not everybody takes four years as an unpaid seller rat, but, you know, to, to learn the industry. And I think we came in with a very different approach, um, in that we had really invested a lot of time in, into learning and, and trying to gather as much information, um, about it. And, you know, cuz we just, you know, we, we would say to people.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: What don't we know that we need to know. Right, right, right. You know, cuz the more you learn, the more you learn, there's all these things you need to learn. Of course. So, so yeah. So I think that, you know, what was interesting was how much more credibility that gave us right off the bat and how much more willing the first couple wineries were to introduce us to other people, um, in the industry.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And they were like, you really need to go talk to so and so I will call them for you. And, and so that was really, to me, um, that was something I felt like was really gratifying almost in a way that we had really, you know,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I would agree with that. And, and the other thing I would say is that back when we first visited this area in 2008, there were a lot more smaller places where you could spend a lot more time talking to the owners and, and the winemakers.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: They spent a lot more time front of house mm-hmm . And we realized, you know, in just talking to them that a lot of these folks, it was their second lives too, you know, they came from other careers, right. They tended to be more technical in nature. Mm-hmm and that's when we started to first feel like, okay, we might be able to do this.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Um, you know, just because a lot of those characteristics were kind of things we already had, it was just a question of learning the other stuff. Right. You know? So you take that, you combine it with what Sarah was talking about. I think about kind of. Humility and the respect yeah. For what everybody else in the valley had done.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I mean, we know this is hard and I, you know, I think a lot of folks don't always take that. I, when I say other folks, I mean, people that come into the industry, don't always kind of have that same appreciation for what it took for folks to build what they have,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: which it's funny when you said that, that reminded me, there was a winery that, that, you know, we, they talked to us and I was like, okay, great.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And like, I think I called them like three months later and I said, okay, you told us to do this and this and this and this and this and this. And we did it also now, what do we do? And they were like, you did what . And we were like, we did everything you told us to do. And they were like, nobody does that.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And we were like, well, Oh, we do. What do we do now? great. Lovely. Now what do we do? And they were just blown away that like, somebody would actually listen to that right. and do what they told us to do. And, and I was like, well, why wouldn't I, I mean, right, you've done this for 15, 20 years. I mean, to me, you are the guru on the mountain, right?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. You

A.J.: know what you're doing?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So I wanna learn, why am I not,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: why would I listen to you? And then be like, they don't know what they're talking about. Yeah. I mean, but there are people that come into the valley and, and do treat it that way, you know? Right. And so, um, so we're not those people, you know, we're just, and, and so that's.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. I mean, we. I, I don't think Dave and I have ever thought that we necessarily knew what dear God knew what we were doing.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: if you're not learning something every day and doing this, I mean, you're, you're not, you know, it's, it's just, again, sort of respect for, for this, this field and just everything changes and, um, you know, the right folks, I think understand that, which is why, you know, when we have connections and relationships with other wines in the community, right.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I mean, it, it tends to be like-minded folks in that sense. Right. And we're all kind of trying to figure this whole thing out in a changing world and a changing climate. And nobody has all the answers. We're all just doing the best we can. Right.

A.J.: And, you know, and even on my side, right. I'm learning so much.

A.J.: Oh yeah. Right. I'm currently reading. I guess you could say a biography it's called a champagne, Charlie. Okay. So it's kind of the, the journey that Charles hick took. Okay. You know, champagne house. Yeah. Yeah. And so he, you know, introduced champagne, you know, not introduced, but like had the major influence of champagne here in the us.

A.J.: Yeah. Okay. And then like the mid 1850s, he was shipping 300,000 cases in the 1850s

Dave from Bells Up Winery: in the 18 freaking fifties. And I'm like, how is that even possible?

A.J.: right. I mean, just number one, producing that much wine and then sharpening new. Now. I'm like, I'm like how in the world is that even possible

Sara from Bells Up Winery: 1850s? Wow. You gotta think about what the ships were like back

Dave from Bells Up Winery: then.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Half of 'em sunk so you make 3000 only half of 'em were gonna get

A.J.: there. Yeah. Right. You know, and it was just crazy. And you know, right now in the book, uh, he just got thrown into, into jealous during the civil war. Oh wow. And, you know, he was just trying to get his money back from, from the people from the south and just like, oh yeah.

A.J.: Yeah. It's so fascinating to learn, you know, different struggles and everything that, you know, everybody's gone through. Oh

Dave from Bells Up Winery: yeah, yeah, yeah. That's well,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: yeah, I was gonna say, that's interesting. You need talk about the, when you, when you put that into context of, of world events, right. Civil war, right. Like what was going on and that's, you know, you think about like where we're at right now, so much of the industry has changed.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Thank you. COVID um, but you know, that's something that, that is just the industry itself. Shifting, you know, it's, it's never the same year twice. No, it's not. And so, so, you know, as the, weather's always shifting the market's

Dave from Bells Up Winery: always shift the market's always shifting the yeah. Yeah. And this is, this is, I think where being small might be our greatest advantage, you know, because we don't, we're not trying to be all things to all people, you know?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I mean, God, 300,000 cases when you're making 600, it's like, oh my God. And you think yourself, you wouldn't, I would never want to come close to that. No, you know, I mean, we've always said that our, our theoretical max would be something around 900 cases because, you know, you want, we wanna keep the model we have.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And obviously, you know, people get into this for a lot of different reasons and they have a lot of different goals and, and God bless him, but it's, you know, we're just kind of happy owning our own little corner here and just kind of letting that, letting that happen. Yeah.

A.J.: Yeah. But, uh, yeah, no. So, you know, max number of like 900 cases, like maybe a thousand, um, We'll see legacy, like what, is there any sort of legacy plans that you're trying to think about?

A.J.: Or you're just like trying to take one day at a

Dave from Bells Up Winery: time right now? It's really one day at a time. Yeah. I mean, and, and in our case, you know, we have a 13 year old daughter and. She's

A.J.: I have a 13

Dave from Bells Up Winery: year old as well, and this is why we drink, right. I up

Sara from Bells Up Winery: her wine. Yeah. This,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: yeah. And, and, you know, she's a great kid and we love her dearly, but she being 13, she's all over the place.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh yeah. And she's got days and, and of course all my customers wanna know, you know, oh, when she gonna take it over, well, you know, when you do it, what we. And the way we do it, right. Your heart and soul and passion every day has to be in it. You have to be in this for the right reasons. Right. And the last thing that you ever want to do is to pressure push.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. To, to, to kind of get her into something that she would not be drawn to herself. Right. And what we've seen, just kind of studying the legacy throughout the valley is, you know, you get some kids love it. They wanna get into it. They can't wait. Some kids can't run far enough away. That's right. Some kids go away from it for a little while and kind of get some perspective outside of the valley and then decide they want to come back and do it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So right. Any of those things are possible. Right? Yeah. But we kind of figure, you know, for us, we're gonna keep doing what we're doing. We're gonna let the legacy continue to build. And as you said one day at a time, and you know what, at some point we're, we'll probably in 20 years be looking at a whole different world than we're looking at now.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Things are gonna happen that we can't possibly anticipate. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So I don't know. I don't think too far, too far in the future, just because I, I just have so much respect for how quickly our world has changed. So in the last, you know, couple decades,

A.J.: well, yeah, I mean, 20 years ago, there's no way I would've been out here with multiple cameras and like doing this right now.

A.J.: on phones no less

Dave from Bells Up Winery: on phones. Yeah. Right. Yeah. Yeah. That's crazy. It is. Crazy's crazy. It's

Sara from Bells Up Winery: crazy. Yeah. It's yeah, yeah. Yeah. I don't think that, well, I mean, 20 years ago, we never would've thought that we'd be doing

Dave from Bells Up Winery: this. Yeah. You know? No, but, but that's, that's the thing about life. You, you just, you know, you, you keep.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You do what feels right at the time you make the best decisions you can, based on what you know. Right. And then you don't beat yourself up about it later on, you know, you, you did the best you could. And, uh, you know, if anything for our daughter, what

we're hoping to show her is that if you are willing to put your time in and work your tail off and do things the right way, you can accomplish special things.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Um, you know, your definition of special will be different than ours probably, but you know, you, you can do what, what you choose to do, you know, but do it smart, right? Have a plan, execute the plan, you know, spend, do a lot of due diligence. I mean, we, you know, people a lot of times talk about, you know, what we do and say, oh, you know, you took this big risk by jumping from, from law to wine.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know, obviously yes, there was a degree of risk taken, but right based, I mean, what Sarah spent a lot of time talking about was kind of all the steps and the planning that went into doing this. Right. Mm-hmm and oh yeah, we can't afford to screw it up. No. So you gotta do it right the first time. So we didn't just start throwing money and everything.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: It was very, as you said, methodical step by step. Right. And always be able to answer the why. Yeah. You're doing any one individual thing. Absolutely. Right. Absolutely. We

Sara from Bells Up Winery: had an amazing financial planner, um, who helped us figure. You know, that was the first thing we did, I think. Oh yeah, yeah. Was sit down with him and say, how can we afford for Dave yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: To not be a lawyer anymore. Right. Because you know, he's gonna learn how to be a winemaker and he's not gonna make any money. I mean, he worked at a retail shop and yet, but, you know, and, and, you know, that's, you know, I, I stepped in as the breadwinner and, and, you know, whereas before it had been very much an equal thing, it was suddenly Nope, not anymore.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and so, so yeah, so we, I mean, but that was part of, it was okay. We, we really can't afford to screw this up. Um, and he was amazing. And, you know, I honestly think when we, when we told everybody in Cincinnati that Dave was not gonna be an attorney anymore, and he was gonna become a winemaker, the reactions

Dave from Bells Up Winery: were varied, varied ,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: but almost to every, every single person to their credit, a lot of them like.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I managed to hold it together, but there was quite a few like doubtful, like St like what

Dave from Bells Up Winery: of course, what the heck, what in the world are you crazy?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: You know? And, and, you know, you gotta remember, I mean, at that time, you know, the, we were in the recession, right? Like it was, oh, it was oh nine. Right. We were in the height of the great recession.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And, you know, I literally said, you're quitting your job because, or, you know, it's me or the job, like, we can't do this. And right. And I think, you know, so we had a lot of people who really didn't, I don't think really thought we could pull it off. Like I really, yeah. And I don't think that they, they thought that we couldn't pull it off because of, of who we were.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I think they just thought that's just the craziest thing ever, you know? Right. You're Midwesterners. You don't do

Dave from Bells Up Winery: that. Yeah. Yeah.

A.J.: No. And it's, you know, I know there's a lot of mentality that goes along with it. Absolutely. And you know what you have done. again. It's absolutely phenomenal. And what you've done.

A.J.: Yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: But yeah, but our financial planner was the only person that looked at us and, and said, I, okay. Here's how we're gonna make it happen. Not never doubted us, not one, not, not, not, he was a very special person. He was an amazing person. Yeah. That's he, we lost him to cancer a few years ago, but yeah, he, he, yeah, he was he's in the vineyard.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, but yeah, he's, he was amazing. And, and yeah, so it was, yeah. So we, so people who think that we just, like Dave said just, oh, well we just chucked it all and did this well, no,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: no, no, no, no lot of blood, sweat and tears. Yeah. We could vouch for each one of those things literally. Literally. Yes. Even today.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Yes. So

A.J.: yeah. Well, should we wrap it up with some rapid fire questions and I'll, uh, reveal the wine. Let's do it. Yeah. Okay. Uh, favorite artist to listen to during harvest?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh gosh. Okay. what

Sara from Bells Up Winery: okay. So I will say so Dave is a huge rush fan. Okay. However, not everybody is so, um, so we tend to compromise by listening to a lot of disco.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So seventies, we play a lot of seventies. We play Barry white

Dave from Bells Up Winery: energy a lot. It's it's about energy. And one of the nice things about being a small is when you're harvesting, you're not harvesting 50 tons in a day or anything like that. Right. So it's a few tons. You it's a day, but it's not a day. Right. But it's gonna drain you and, and to have some energy to kind of pick up you and, and not just us, but of course, the people that come and volunteer to help us at sorting time when the fruit's been harvested.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And when we sort, kind of bringing that energy up too, I mean, that's a big time help, but I will say that when it's just me doing things like punch downs, I'll I'll Blair rush a lot. Yes. Nice, nice, nice.

A.J.: uh, your favorite indulgent food. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh goodness. Oh, anything at rose Marino? oh, everything at rose Marino.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: yes. Oh goodness. Yeah. AB absolutely. I, I would say, you know, for us, the, the other thing that we just, absolutely, this is, this is the one thing that we miss about Cincinnati cuisine is skyline chilling. Now it's not an indulgence. I would say for people if you live in Cincinnati, but when you're out here, the only way you can really get it is by getting the cans through Amazon, which are not cheap.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So I would then call it for us an indulgence. Sure. Um, but when we need just that comfort, every once in a while to take back, we'll pop a few cans and this is something, fortunately, our daughter, one of the rare things that our daughter won't complain about when you make it for her. And so it's just kind of something that the entire family loves and, um, just kind of can take us back works at any time of year, summer, winter, spring.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: It doesn't matter. It tastes great any time, right? Yeah. No, that's

A.J.: awesome. That is awesome. Uh, if you could choose a superpower who it would, it.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Mine would definitely be invisibility. Okay. I cuz you know what? There are just some times there are just some times that I need, I know exactly why like whatever

Sara from Bells Up Winery: list comes out there, wishes it could be in. Didn't see ya. Yeah. Right. Whenever I ask you to do something, that's when you'd like to meet suddenly that makes suddenly it makes perfect sense.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: You know it, you know it, I don't, I, I, God, I mean you are already super so. Oh, thank you. You know,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: whatever. Um, I don't know. I think I would, I don't know. I,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I'll tell you what your superpower should be. Okay. Oh, this be bad because no Sarah has Sarah has an, an immeasurable number of amazing qualities.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. But she's a horrible time manager. I, so the ability to stop time yeah. Would and be able to get enough things, get everything done. Yeah. Uh, would

Sara from Bells Up Winery: be awesome for you. There's a lot. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I have a lot going on. So yeah, that would

Dave from Bells Up Winery: be, and you take on way more than you should.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: It's true. And it really is true.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: And then I, I, you know, like you talk about, oh, squirrel, um, yeah. You know, you, I mean, you'll get started down one path and then you'll be walking by the laundry room and you're like, oh, forgot to put the wash in the dryer. Oh, forgot the, and then suddenly you're

Dave from Bells Up Winery: 16. Where was I doing?

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Right? Yes. It's it's the, if you give em, what is it, if you give a mouse cookie, it's the, if you give a mouse cookie thing, there was something that made the, the circuit of social media a few years ago.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: If you give a mom a muffin, like, you know, and she'll, she'll decide she needs a coffee and then she'll discover there's no coffee and give

Dave from Bells Up Winery: her the,

A.J.: and then you gotta make coffee always. And then I don't have any cream. I gotta go to the store. And then I gotta make a list where it's my list. And like, oh, wait, that's just, oh, exactly.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah, no, I,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: yeah. That's, that's probably good. That or the ability to sleep, um,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: like, you know, the invisibility would help with that. I think that was because if nobody can find you, I think it covers for a lot of senses at that point. Yeah. That's it does. It does

A.J.: oh, the last book that you read, you know, or listen to on tape or audible, or you can say that. No, I have, oh gosh. Um,

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I can't remember what it was called. I, so I don't have time to read. Um, but our daughter, um, our daughter has dyslexia, so, um, so she had to read a book, um, this year for, um, a literature class.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: She does online school. Right. And, um, and there's, as you know, there's these, um, plugins where the, the computer will read to you. Right. And kind of a monotone voice. It's not very exciting. So, um, and we had this glitch, like it would only read chapter one. Oh no. Yeah. So, so I was like, she kept saying, mom, it only reads chapter one.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So I wound up reading it to her. Um, and, and it was a really good story. What was it was, uh, I think it was something about the secret life of coyote, sunshine or something. And it was a really interesting book. It was a teen book. Right. You know? Right. But it was really, it was really good. It was about, um, a girl who had been through, um, a horrible tragedy.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Um, and she and her dad had kind of run away, um, and created a new life for themselves and, and nice. It was really an interesting, it was really well written. Um, I really enjoyed it. But for the life of me, I can't remember the title of it, but that's okay. Something of it. Yeah. Yeah. That's fine. It was good.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So, yeah. So I've been reading tween drama with my new genre. Yeah. But yeah, that's probably the last book book, so

Dave from Bells Up Winery: yeah, so like for me, I would, I'm, I'm kind of in the, the same position about, about, um, about the books. One thing that I have started to be able to, that I've started to do is to start consuming podcasts.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh yeah. On subjects kind of in places of books, because depending on who's doing the podcasting and what their style is, right. You really are getting book content. Yes. In a, in just a different. Form. I mean, it's storytelling in a very similar way, just in a different form. Right. So I'm kind of a history geek.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Okay. So I, especially when I have tractor days and I can listen to, I can either, you know, splurge or just listen to some long podcasts. Um, the Mike Duncan revolution series and Dan Carlin's history podcast and, and Carlin's stuff, he's an amazing storyteller, but these podcasts can be six hours long. Holy cow.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Oh yeah. And so when you're on a tractor for a day, you know, I'm, I'm not touching that podcast until I know I'm gonna spend a day on and I can knock that out. Right. And it's fantastic. And by the time you're done, you're, I mean, you're done and you've been enthralled and you haven't noticed that you've been sitting on a tractor Joslyn around physics hours.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. Right. Um, but I've kind of found that to be a medium, that kind of works better. Um, and then just because it's kind of coming in segments, you know, bits at a time, you know, 30 minutes, 45 minutes, it's a lot easier to be able to consume over the course of a day than to try to kind of get back into a book and kind of forget where you are.

A.J.: Right. Yeah. No, I, I totally understand that. Yeah. Harvest notes. Are they written or, uh, digital?

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Both. Both. Okay. Both. I think they, they kind of have to be, I mean, for us, it's fortunately a little bit simpler. Right. Um, you know, certainly our, um, certainly our fermentation notes are all written down. Um, and then we'll digitize that, um, you kind of, you start with the, I start with the paper and then we digitize it at the end of the, at the end of the year.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. Um, now I will say that when I, in, in, when I interned at Alexander, we were obviously doing a lot more in terms of volume than we're doing here. So there, you really, even in 2012, they were, we were kind of beginning the digitalization of everything that they were doing then. Yeah. But fortunately for us, I mean, we can at least be a little bit more paper based, at least until it comes time to like keep the permanent record.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: And then in that case, we'll transfer it over. Right.

A.J.: Very nice. Yeah. All right. Well, shall I reveal some more? Yes, absolutely. Okay. So. Pretty close on the year. Okay. But what's really funny is we both brought a 2015.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: that's funny. Oh, see 14. I nailed it. 14. I nailed it. There you, oh, no, I'm sorry. My bad. I said either 15 or 17, my

Sara from Bells Up Winery: bad, my bad.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: I just kind of thinking 14, honestly. See that

Dave from Bells Up Winery: that's very pre I also don't trust myself.

A.J.: yeah. No. And it's it's you know, and I thought it was, uh, it was appropriate, right? Yeah. Since, uh,

Dave from Bells Up Winery: since that's how you, yeah. Yeah. That's so funny. Oh, that's cool. Yeah. That's cool. Yeah. That's

Sara from Bells Up Winery: so funny. So you should probably explain why you brought, um, the potters vineyard.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: VNAI 2014.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: So

A.J.: the, when, uh, a couple months ago, you know, going to, I got invited to, you know, going to, to potters to celebrate their, their 10th anniversary. Mm-hmm mm-hmm . And so they had just a bunch of random, um, 2014 Pinots throughout the valley, uh, blind tasting. And what was really fun was like one of the top rated 2014.

A.J.: Pinots in that lineup was your 2014. I don't remember which label.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: It's Villa. Villa. Yes. Yes. Villa. Yes. Yes. Mm-hmm. . That was a really fun wine that we did. It's that particular wine villain L was a hundred percent made from free run juice. So nothing that came out of the press went into that particular wine.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Right. And the whole goal with that was to create as soft and supple a wine, I think, as, as you could do, cuz you weren't bringing in, uh, you weren't bringing in the press tannins into it. Right? Yeah. Um, and so that was one that we, we, because it was so special, we only ever sold it to club members. Um, so somehow we, we must have somehow.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: I dunno. Somehow I got out.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: Yeah. It was really funny cuz yeah. Cuz I remember I saw the email and I was like uhoh uh oh. And then you had posted about it and I was like, oh

Dave from Bells Up Winery: thank God.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: oh, it's it's okay. It scored. Okay. Thank God. Yes,

A.J.: yes. No it did great. But yeah. Yeah it did really good. I

Dave from Bells Up Winery: immediately emailed I'm like, oh thank you. I'm so relieved. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And it's. Yeah. So it was one, we were obviously very, very proud of and, and happy that it got presented in that way. Yeah.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Because otherwise, I don't know how it would've. Right. But, uh, fantastic. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you for sharing this. Awesome.

A.J.: You know, thank you for your time. This was a pleasure to, to sit down with you and again, the weather its gorgeous. Yeah.

Sara from Bells Up Winery: So you're, you're staying right. the rest of the

Dave from Bells Up Winery: summer. I'll see what I can do.

Dave from Bells Up Winery: Okay. Sounds good. All right. Well thank you again so much. Thank you for having us. All right. Thanks.